

CHAPTER 11

PARADES

The term “parade” had various meanings to Continental Army troops camped at Valley Forge. It could mean to form, march, and drill. Present day parade procedures originated from the daily activities conducted then to form, organize, instruct, and issue parole and countersign words to the various guards on duty (outpost, picket, camp, and quarters). Early parades also enabled commanders to give special instructions to subordinate leaders and to make command announcements. In the U.S. Army regulations of 1863, reviews were a type of parade, and “dress parades” were conducted daily, except on extraordinary and urgent occasions. The parade remains basically the same as the review except that it has retained its original intent—a method whereby unit commanders could inspect troops, present awards, and issue information. The sequence of a parade has the following steps—formation of troops, sound off by a band, honors to the nation, presentation, manual of arms, report, orders published, officers center, pass in review.

11-1. HISTORY

This paragraph discusses the history of the parade and how it applies to today’s Army.

a. Battalion and brigade parades are opened by adjutant’s call sounded on a trumpet. This call has opened parades of the American forces for over 150 years. After some preliminaries, the adjutant directs **SOUND OFF** and the band plays three chords. Having sounded off, the band marches in front of the troops and then countermarches to its original position. This *March* across the front of the line is said to have originated with the Crusades (A.D. 1095 to 1260). The troops offering themselves for holy service were drawn up in a long formation and the band countermarched only before those chosen to serve. In American ceremonies, the sound off has been handed down as a ceremonial tradition.

b. After the band sounds off, the commanding officer may, if he wishes, give the troops some *Facings* or movements of the manual of arms. This was the traditional way in which he established control over his command, and it has been practiced in the United States since the revolutionary war.

c. Parades in the revolutionary army were usually held at “Troops” or about 8 o’clock in the morning and was the time used for sergeants to call the roll and report it to the adjutant.

d. After the sergeants had returned to their posts, the commander directed that necessary orders and information be reported. After the adjutant had read the orders, he announced “*Parade is dismissed.*” At that time, officers moved to a position centered on the commanding officer. As the commander gave specific instructions to the officers, the first sergeants would march their units back to their respective company areas where they would be dismissed.

11-2. PREPARATION

The appearance and movement of troops in formation are the primary characteristics of a parade. The preparation and organization of troops for a parade are similar to that for a review. In a parade, since the commander of troops is also the reviewing officer, the distance between the troops and the commander is greater than that for a review. Other differences are that the band conducts *Sound Off*, the inspection is omitted, a report is rendered, orders are published, and officers and guidons are marched forward and centered on the commander. If retreat is scheduled, honors to the nation are conducted concurrently with retreat.

11-3. CEREMONIAL BATTALION PARADE

The procedures for conducting a ceremonial battalion parade are discussed herein.

a. **Formation of Troops.** Units are moved to their positions on the ready line in the most convenient manner. The commander prescribes the routes, sequence, and time of arrival on the ready line. He and his staff take their posts before adjutant's call. The procedure for moving from the ready line to the final line is the same as for a review.

b. **Sound Off.** After the battalion has been formed, aligned, and given *Parade Rest* on the final line, the adjutant directs **SOUND OFF** and assumes the position of *Parade Rest*. He remains facing the formation.

(1) At the directive *Sound Off*, the band plays three sound off chords. At the conclusion of the third chord, the band moves forward playing a march in quick time. The band executes a left turn to march across the front of the troops. At the left of the line of troops, the band countermarches and returns over the same ground to the right of the line. After the band has passed beyond the right of the troops, it executes a right turn, countermarches again, and halts in its original position.

(2) When the band has halted, it ceases playing at the next convenient place in the music and again plays the three sound off chords. (Trooping the line by the band may be eliminated when ceremonies are conducted indoors during inclement weather and space is limited).

NOTE: Retreat, when scheduled, is integrated at this point. Upon completion of the sound off chords, the band pauses briefly and then plays retreat (by the trumpet section) without a command from the adjutant. Upon completion of retreat, the adjutant comes to *Attention* and directs **BRING YOUR UNITS TO ATTENTION AND PRESENT ARMS**. The commander and his staff assume *Parade Rest*, *Attention*, *Present Arms*, and *Order Arms* with the adjutant. The adjutant faces about and salutes. The adjutant's *Salute* is the signal for the band to play "To the Color" or the National Anthem. At the conclusion of "To the Color" or the National Anthem, the adjutant comes to *Order Arms*, and faces about, and directs **BRING YOUR UNITS TO ORDER ARMS**. After the last unit comes to *Order Arms*, the adjutant faces about.

c. **Honors to the Nation.** If retreat is not conducted, the adjutant (after the band has completed *Sound Off*) assumes the position of *Attention* and directs **BRING YOUR UNITS TO ATTENTION AND PRESENT ARMS**. Unit commanders assume the

position of *Attention*, face about, and command **Company, ATTENTION, Present, ARMS**. They face about and salute. When all units are at *Present Arms*, the adjutant faces about and salutes. This is the signal for the band to play the National Anthem. The battalion commander and his staff execute **Present, ARMS** on his command on the first note of the music.

d. **Presentation.** Upon completion of the National Anthem, the battalion commander and his staff execute **Order, ARMS** on his command. The adjutant terminates his *Salute*, faces about, and directs **BRING YOUR UNITS TO ORDER ARMS**. Unit commanders terminate their *Salute*, face about, command **Order, ARMS**, and then face (back) to the front. When all units are at *Order Arms*, the adjutant faces about, salutes, and reports “**Sir, the parade is formed.**” The battalion commander returns the *Salute* and commands **POST**. The adjutant marches forward, passes by the battalion commander’s right, and takes his post as the right flank member of the staff.

e. **Manual of Arms.** After the adjutant has joined the staff, the battalion commander commands such movements in the manual of arms as he may desire. When desired, the commander may direct, rather than command, **HAVE YOUR UNITS EXECUTE THE MANUAL OF ARMS**. The unit commanders, in sequence from right to left, command **Right Shoulder, ARMS; Port, ARMS; Left Shoulder, ARMS; Order, ARMS**. When the unit on the right has completed all of the movements, the next unit then begins and so on until the last unit has completed the movements.

f. **Report.** When all units have completed the manual of arms, the battalion commander then directs **RECEIVE THE REPORT**. The adjutant returns to his position at the center of the command and commands **REPORT**. Unit commanders in succession, from right to left, salute and report “_____ **Company, all present or accounted for.**” The adjutant returns each commander’s *Salute*. After receiving the report, the adjutant faces about, salutes, and reports “**Sir, all present or accounted for.**”

g. **Publishing of Orders.** The battalion commander returns the *Salute* and directs **PUBLISH THE ORDERS**. The adjutant faces about and directs **ATTENTION TO ORDERS** (he then reads the orders).

h. **Officers Center March.** After reading the orders, the adjutant directs **BRING YOUR UNITS TO PARADE REST**.

(1) Unit commanders face about and command **Parade, REST**. They then face about and come to *Parade Rest*. When all units are at *Parade Rest*, the adjutant commands (loud enough for the band to hear) **Officers** (pause), **Center** (long pause), **MARCH**. He then faces about and takes his post with the staff.

(a) On the command **Officers**, all officers come to *Attention* and guidon bearers come to *Carry Guidon*.

(b) On the command **Center**, when companies are in mass formation, the company commanders and guidon bearers face to the center. Officers commanding platoons move one step forward and face to the center. Executive officers move through the interval between units nearest to the center and take their posts in the column formed by the platoon leaders.

(c) At the command **MARCH**, the band plays marching music and continues to play until the officers have halted in front of the commander. Officers and guidon bearers close to the center, halt, and individually face to the front. Company commanders, when moving to the center, face half right or half left in marching, march to the front, and close

on a line four steps in advance of the line of guidon bearers. The guidon bearers close on their own line, each taking a post to the rear of his company commander. All other officers close on the line of platoon leaders (Figure 11-1).

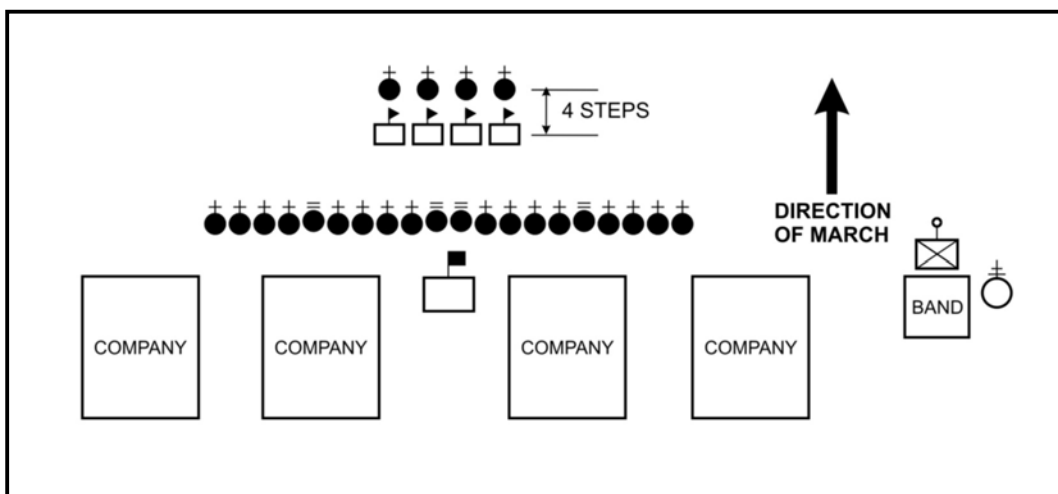


Figure 11-1. Position of key personnel after the command *Officers, Center, MARCH*.

(2) After the officers and guidon bearers have closed and faced to the front, the senior company commander commands **Forward, MARCH**. The center officer of the leading rank is the guide. The officers and guidon bearers are halted with the leading rank six steps from the battalion commander, and they salute. The senior company commander commands **HALT** and **Present ARMS**. The battalion commander returns the *Salute*. On the command **Order, ARMS** by the senior company commander, the officers execute *Order Arms* and the guidon bearers execute *Carry Guidon*.

(3) The battalion commander gives such instruction as he deems necessary and then commands **Officers, Post (pause), MARCH**.

(a) At the command **Post**, all officers and guidon bearers face about.

(b) At the command of execution **MARCH**, the band begins to play and officers and guidon bearers step off.

(4) The senior commander commands **Officers, HALT**. He halts the leading rank in line, three steps from the line of companies. He then commands **Post (pause), MARCH**.

(a) At the command **Post**, the officers and guidon bearers face outward.

(b) At the command **MARCH**, the officers and guidon bearers step off and return to their posts and come to *Parade Rest*. The music ceases when the last officer has taken his post and come to *Parade Rest*.

(5) During the execution of *Officers Center* and *Officers Post*, except when saluting, all guidon bearers remain at *Carry Guidon*.

i. **Pass in Review.** When all officers have returned to their posts and the band has stopped playing, the battalion commander directs **BRING YOUR UNITS TO ATTENTION**. Unit commanders assume the position of *Attention*, face about, and command **Company, ATTENTION**. Then they face about. When all units are at *Attention*, the battalion commander directs **PASS IN REVIEW**. The battalion passes in

review in the same manner as prescribed for a review except the units render honors when six steps to the left of the commander of troops and staff, and terminate honors when the unit is six steps to the right of the commander of troops and staff. The commander of troops and staff then assumes the role of the reviewing party—at their location on the field.

j. **Conclusion.** When the last element of troops has passed the reviewing stand and executed *Ready Front*, the band ceases playing and goes immediately into an eight-bar drum cadence. On the first beat following drum cadence, the band begins playing (in place) the official version of “The Army Goes Rolling Along,” beginning at the introduction. On the second time through letter A (or ninth bar), the drum major has the band march forward and execute a left turn onto the reviewing line while continuing to play until the completion of the chorus. The completion of “The Army Goes Rolling Along” terminates the ceremony. It is appropriate for spectators to rise and stand at the position of *Attention* while “The Army Goes Rolling Along” is being played.

11-4. CEREMONIAL BRIGADE PARADE

The brigade ordinarily is formed in line with battalions in mass formations. The parade is the same as the ceremonial battalion parade with the following exceptions:

- The brigade commander is substituted for battalion commander, and brigade for battalion, in the description.
 - In moving across the front of the brigade, the band passes in front of the line of battalion commanders during the *Sound Off*.
- a. The battalions execute *Present Arms*, *Order Arms*, *Parade Rest*, and come to *Attention* on the command of execution of their respective commanders. Reports are made by the battalion commanders instead of company commanders.
 - b. At the command of execution **MARCH**, of **Officers, Center, MARCH**, the battalion commanders, their staffs, and Colors close on the line of battalion commanders and staffs. The company commanders face to the half right or half left in marching and close on a line four steps to the rear of the battalion Color. The guidon bearers face half right or half left in marching and close on a line four steps back of the company commanders. The other officers face half right or half left in marching and close on a line four steps in back of the guidon bearers. The command sergeant major remains in place and assumes command of the battalion.
 - c. The officers, guidon bearers, and Colors having closed and faced to the front, the senior battalion commander commands **Forward, MARCH**. The center officer of the leading rank is the guide. On the command of the senior battalion commander, the officers, guidon bearers, and Colors are halted with the leading ranks six steps from the brigade commander. They salute the brigade commander; he returns the *Salute*. The commands **Present, ARMS** and **Order, ARMS** are given by the senior battalion commander.
 - d. The brigade commander commands **Officers, Post** (pause), **MARCH**. On the command **Post**, the Colors execute *Reverse March*. All others execute *About Face*. On the command of execution **MARCH**, the officers, Colors, and guidon bearers march forward. The senior battalion commander commands **Officers, HALT** so that the rank of battalion commanders is on line with its original position. The senior battalion commander then commands **Post** (pause), **MARCH**. On the command **Post**, the battalion

commanders and staffs face outward, the battalion Color guard executes wheeling movements, and on the command of execution **MARCH**, the Color guard marches back to its original position. The company commanders, guidon bearers, and other officers face to the half right or half left in marching and move back to their original positions.

11-5. STREET PARADES

For street parades, troops are formed and marched in the most convenient manner. Street parades may include military vehicles. Towed or transported weapons add to the drama of a street parade. Cargo vehicles are included only to increase the size of the display.

- a. Practical formations for street parades are:
 - Columns of threes and fours.
 - Two or more columns of threes and fours abreast.
 - Mass formation.
- b. The vehicles move in a single column or column of twos, threes, or fours abreast, as the width of the street permits.
- c. In order to keep military units in the same cadence, units should not march between two bands.